

Today's News - Tuesday, April 1, 2008

We're saddened by the passing of Ralph Rapson, who "preached the gospel of context." – More nods for Nouvel (following yesterday's glut): Glancey on the "gentle giant of Paris": "It's about time his delicate genius got its due." – Arch Record talks to the man of the hour. – Nouvel buildings: "Impractical, sometimes. Over budget, occasionally. But never dull or ugly." – A critical look at the flawed selection process re: Hudson Yards (with a swipe at Ouroussoff and arch critics in general). – In New Orleans, big plans, but few signs of transformation. – Ouroussoff warns that big plans for Greenwich Village could leave us with the "urban equivalent of a patient on meds: safe, numb, soulless." – A "cautious song of celebration for the doomed Employment Exchange" in Manchester, U.K. – Rawsthorn and Lowry take on cautionary tales of badly designed signage and digital billboards as an assault on the landscape. – Hume on the evolution of glass and light in architecture. – A most unusual church in Anchorage shaped to funnel light upon the faithful. – Kamin has an amusing conversation with the "very sweet" Ada Louise (when she's not "taking aim at awful architecture"). – Starck says design is dead and he wants to quit. – Calls for entries: LONDON 2008 - Adaptable architecture gallery (registration opens today); and Lord & Taylor Everything's Coming Up Roses Contest. – National Landscape Architecture Month begins today. – It's also April 1st, so how could we not include our annual fave: PPS's Faking Places; and something we hope is a joke: Elephants to work on UK construction sites (no hard hats required).

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[Obituary: Ralph Rapson, 93: ...designed the former Guthrie Theater, several other landmarks and furniture during his 70-year plus career...was one of the world's oldest practicing architects and one of the most prolific. \[slide show, video links\]](#)- Minneapolis Star Tribune

[Editorial: Architect passes on, but not his influence: It's too simple, as well as too sad, to linger long over the coincidence of Ralph Rapson's death and Jean Nouvel's Pritzker Prize...He preached the gospel of context...one more way in which the Nouvel Guthrie...reflects Rapson's influence rather than repudiates it.](#)- Minneapolis Star Tribune

[The gentle giant of Paris: Jean Nouvel has won the Pritzker prize. It's about time his delicate genius got its due...to remind us that we can reach for the sky, architecturally, without sacrificing art, good manners, lightness and beauty.](#) By Jonathan Glancey- Guardian (UK)

[Special Report/Exclusive Interview: Jean Nouvel Wins 2008 Pritzker Prize: ...has talked of creating buildings that he hopes will disappear into their surroundings...contrary to the architect's own desire, his buildings already stand out.](#) By James Murdock [slide show, links]- Architectural Record

[The shock of the Nouvel: All modern buildings look the same, the critics claim. Not so, say the judges of the prestigious Pritzker prize...No one has ever accused a Nouvel building of being dull or ugly or repetitive. Impractical, sometimes. Over budget, occasionally. But never dull or ugly.](#) By John Lichfield- Independent (UK)

[Follow the Money: With the winning bid for the Hudson Rail Yards announced, Stephen Zacks takes a critical look at the flawed selection process. -- Helmut Jahn/Peter Walker: Steven Holl; FXFowle/Pelli Clarke Pelli/WR; Kohn Pedersen Fox \(KPF\)/Robert A.M. Stern/Arquitectonica; Skidmore Owings & Merrill \(SOM\)/Thomas Phifer/SHoP/Diller Scofidio + Renfro/Sejima + Ryue/SANAA/Handel Architects \[images, links\]](#)- Metropolis Magazine

[Big Plans Are Slow to Bear Fruit in New Orleans: A year after city officials unveiled a plan to redevelop the city, there are few signs of that transformation...Edward J. Blakely said the public's frustration was understandable, but...bureaucratic hurdles had made moving faster impossible.](#)- New York Times

[In Greenwich Village, a Proposal That Erases History: ...St. Vincent hospital's application reflects the pernicious but prevalent notion that any single building that is not a major historical landmark...is unworthy of our protection...If we continue down this path, we'll end up with the urban equivalent of a patient on meds: safe, numb, soulless.](#) By Nicolai Ouroussoff -- Albert C. Ledner (1963) [images]- New York Times

[The Good, the Average and the Ugly: ...a cautious song of celebration for the doomed Employment Exchange...maybe there's a case...to keep this building and convert it into apartments...in some fantasy world if execution...is stayed, put me down for the flat with the massive terrace -- David Thomson \(1936\); E.H. Montague Ebbs \(1951\); Ian Simpson Architects \[images\]](#)- Manchester Confidential (UK)

[Navigating a badly informed world of information: ...for every shining example of good information design, there are, sadly, many more cautionary tales of bad ones...the misleading sign...the dysfunctional Web site...over-complicated form... By Alice Rawsthorn](#)- International Herald Tribune

[With billboards, cities are facing the digital decision: ...digital billboards represent a significant ratcheting up of the industry's assault on the American landscape...State and local governments are struggling with how to regulate this bold new breed.](#) By Patricia Lowry- Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

[Enlightenment, wrought in glass: The story of Western architecture is one of darkness giving way to light. Europe's dour medieval fortresses were replaced by airy Gothic structures and for the modernists, light was an end in itself. Has this tale run its course?](#) By Christopher Hume -- Paul Scheerbarth; Bruno Taut; Mies van der Rohe; Philip

[Johnson: I.M. Pei](#)- Toronto Star

[Church constructs unusual building to attract converts: ...describing it has become a neighborhood pastime. It's a teepee. An upside-down ice cream cone. A pagoda, done in Danish Modern...La Luz del Mundo...an architectural standout among the bland angles of '70s strip malls and office buildings... -- Carroll Stockard Architect \[slide show\]](#)- Anchorage Daily News (Alaska)

[Ada Louise Huxtable: Still giving buildings a good sharp kick: Ada Louise...is the grande dame of American architecture criticism, revered for her incisive observations and zinger prose. She's also very sweet...Nice, of course, unless she's taking aim at awful architecture. By Blair Kamin](#)- Chicago Tribune

[Philippe Starck says design is dead and his work 'unnecessary'...and he wants to quit \(AFP\)](#)- News.com (Australia)

[Call for entries \(registration opens today\): LONDON 2008 - Adaptable architecture gallery \(international\); prizes: trip to London, cash; early registration deadline: April 30](#)- Architectum

[Call for entries: Lord & Taylor Everything's Coming Up Roses Contest: create the Rose that will adorn bags, boxes and gift cards, legendary Fifth Avenue windows in the Spring Rose Campaign of 2009; deadline: May 26](#)- Lord & Taylor

[National Landscape Architecture Month Begins: ...encompasses Earth Day on April 22 and the birthday of Frederick Law Olmsted on April 26...](#)- LAND Online / American Society of Landscape Architect (ASLA)

[Faking Places April 1, 2008: U.S. economy rebounds thanks to huge growth of farmers markets; Los Angeles now a pedestrian paradise: AAA shifts focus from autos to pedestrians...re-branding itself the American Amblers Association...](#)- Project for Public Spaces (PPS)

[Elephants to work on UK construction sites: Zoos could become sustainable logistic centres as first trained elephant prepares for work on Southwark site...Oversized construction hats will not be necessary...working on the 2012 venues in Stratford will wear white vests to reflect the traditional athletic strips worn by British Olympians.](#)- Building (UK)

[Notably Nouvel: 2008 Pritzker Architecture Prize Laureate: This year's recipient will be saying "merci" in Washington, DC. \[images\]](#)- ArchNewsNow.com



[Herzog & de Meuron: CaixaForum Madrid, Spain](#)

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